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› May 2021



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Average Weekly Earnings, Australia

Estimates of weekly earnings classified by industry, sector, state and territory

Reference period May 2021

Released 19/08/2021

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Key statistics

Estimates for average weekly ordinary time earnings for full-time adults (seasonally adjusted):

- Increased by 1.4% to \$1,737.10 annually to May 2021.
- Males: \$1,996.60 (public), and \$1,807.40 (private).
- Females: \$1,781.60 (public), and \$1,490.70 (private).

		May 2021	May 2020 to May 2021
		\$	% change
Seasonally Adjusted	Full-time adult ordinary time earnings (a)	1,737.10	1.4
	Full-time adult total earnings	1,798.00	1.6
	All employees total earnings (a)	1,305.80	0.1
Original	Full-time adult ordinary time earnings	1,737.10	1.4
	Full-time adult total earnings	1,797.00	1.6
	All employees total earnings	1,305.80	0.1

(a) This component is not seasonally adjusted.

Survey impacts and changes

COVID-19 impacts on average weekly earnings

The COVID-19 period has been unprecedented in the scale and speed of changes in the labour market. As various restrictions to control COVID-19 have been implemented, relaxed and lifted, employment and hours have changed considerably.

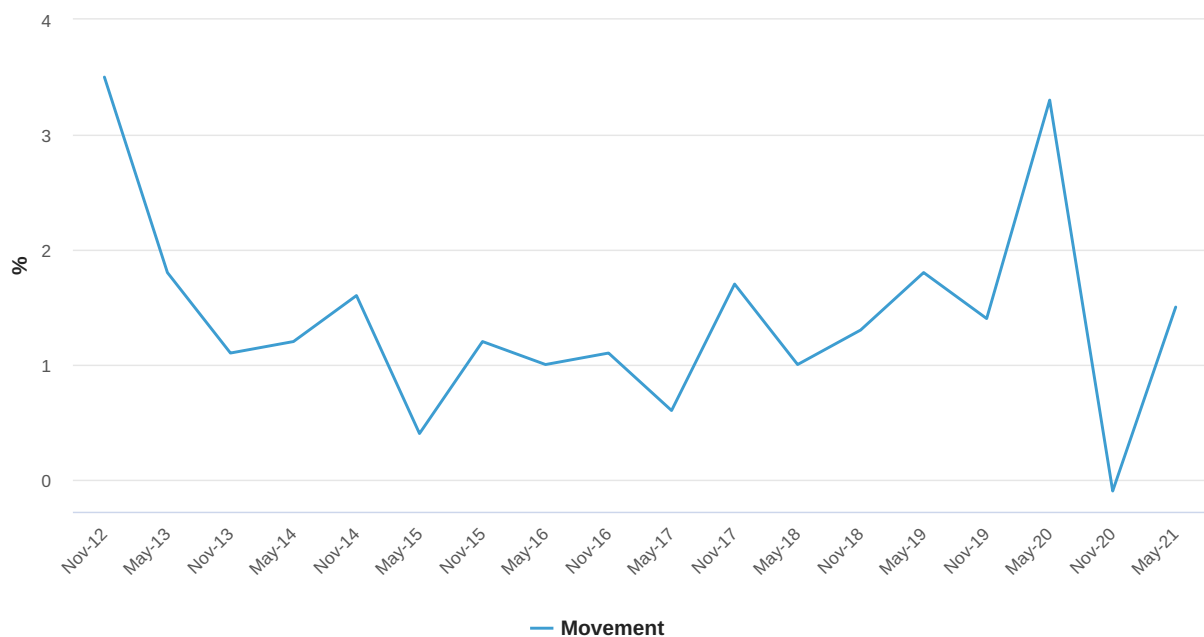
The May 2020 cycle of the Survey of Average Weekly Earnings (AWE) collected data from businesses for the last pay period ending on or before 15 May 2020. At that stage, there were widespread social distancing and other business-related restrictions in place to reduce the spread of COVID-19. These restrictions led to a large decrease in the number of jobs, people employed and hours worked, with lower paid jobs and industries particularly impacted, including jobs in Accommodation and food services, Arts and recreation services, and Other services. The large-scale loss of lower paid jobs in these industries had the effect of increasing the value of average weekly earnings at the total economy level. The full-time adult average weekly earnings increased by 3.3 per cent biannually over this time. Annual percentage movements from May 2020 to May 2021 should be considered with this in mind.

By the November 2020 cycle, lower paid employment and hours had partly recovered, which resulted in a 0.1 per cent fall in average weekly earnings. While the recovery varied by industry and other factors, there was sufficient recovery at the lower end of the earnings distribution to put downward pressure on average earnings. In November, employment was 1.3 per cent below March 2020 (as per [Labour Force, Australia \(/statistics/labour/employment-and-unemployment/labour-force-australia/latest-release\)](https://www.abs.gov.au/statistics/labour/employment-and-unemployment/labour-force-australia/latest-release) estimates).

The May 2021 reference period (the last pay period ending on or before 21 May 2021) fell prior to the recent outbreak of COVID-19 cases in the eastern states. At the time, employment was 1.0 per cent above March 2020 and many restrictions had eased. The full-time adult average weekly earnings increased by 1.5 per cent between November 2020 and May 2021, reflecting the further shift towards a more typical earnings distribution and

more usual six-monthly change in average earnings.

Six monthly movement - Average weekly ordinary time earnings, Full-time adults, Seasonally adjusted



Continued suspension of trend estimates

Consistent with other ABS labour statistics, the AWE trend series have been suspended until more certainty emerges in the underlying trend in earnings estimates over the COVID-19 period. The reinstatement of AWE trend estimates will be reviewed for the November 2021 cycle. Spreadsheets containing seasonally adjusted and original data will continue to be published in the standard format, but trend spreadsheets will not be published during the COVID-19 period.

Seasonal adjustment

During the COVID-19 period, the ABS will use forward seasonal factors to produce some seasonally adjusted average weekly earnings estimates. Forward factor adjustments are

generally better suited to managing large movements at the end point of a series and ensure that large movements do not have a disproportionate influence on the seasonal factors. The forward factor approach is not considered suitable for series with a non-seasonal span, and the concurrent adjustment method continued to be used for these series.

Prior to the release of the AWE May 2021 estimates, the ABS undertook a review of the seasonally adjusted AWE series. As part of this process, static forward factors have been calculated for the next 12 months taking effect from the May 2021 release.

For a more detailed discussion on the implications of unusual events on time series, see [When it's not "business-as-usual": Implications for ABS Time Series](https://www.abs.gov.au/ausstats/abs@.nsf/Previousproducts/1350.0Feature%20Article1Aug%202009?opendocument&tabname=Summary&prodno=1350.0&issue=Aug%202009&num=&view=).) ([https://www.abs.gov.au/ausstats/abs@.nsf/Previousproducts/1350.0Feature%20Article1Aug%202009?opendocument&tabname=Summary&prodno=1350.0&issue=Aug%202009&num=&view=\).](https://www.abs.gov.au/ausstats/abs@.nsf/Previousproducts/1350.0Feature%20Article1Aug%202009?opendocument&tabname=Summary&prodno=1350.0&issue=Aug%202009&num=&view=).)

Survey responses remain high in May

Responses for the Average Weekly Earnings May 2021 cycle remained high. The ABS would like to thank the Australian business community for their continued support in responding to our surveys during such a difficult time, given how critically important this information is.

Understanding compositional changes in earnings

The Australian Bureau of Statistics' Average Weekly Earnings survey is designed to measure the level of average earnings in Australia at a point in time. Movements in average weekly earnings can be affected by changes in both the level of earnings per employee and in the composition of the labour force. Factors which can contribute to compositional change include variation in the proportion of full-time, part-time, casual and junior employees; variation in the occupational distribution within and across industries; variation in the distribution of employment between industries; and variation in the distribution of hours worked and paid for.

It is also important to note that while Average Weekly Earnings data can be used to compare, at the very broad level, average earnings between males and females, such comparisons do not take into account a range of compositional differences. For example, differences in occupation or hours worked can contribute significantly to the differences observed between male and female earnings. Details of occupation and hours worked are not collected in the Average Weekly Earnings survey. For further comparisons between male and female wages, including hourly rates and by occupation, refer to [Employee Earnings](#)

and Hours, Australia (<https://www.abs.gov.au/statistics/labour/earnings-and-work-hours/employee-earnings-and-hours-australia/latest-release>).

For more information on compositional changes, see [Spotlight: Increases in Average Weekly Earnings – compositional changes during the COVID-19 period](https://www.abs.gov.au/statistics/labour/earnings-and-work-hours/average-weekly-earnings-australia/may-2020#spotlight-increases-in-average-weekly-earnings-compositional-changes-during-the-covid-19-period) (<https://www.abs.gov.au/statistics/labour/earnings-and-work-hours/average-weekly-earnings-australia/may-2020#spotlight-increases-in-average-weekly-earnings-compositional-changes-during-the-covid-19-period>).

Australia

Average weekly earnings, seasonally adjusted

		May 2021	May 2020 to May 2021
		\$	% change
Males	Full-time adult average weekly ordinary time earnings (a)	1,837.00	1.4
	Full-time adult average weekly total earnings	1,921.10	1.6
	All employees average weekly total earnings (a)	1,555.30	1.1
Females	Full-time adult average weekly ordinary time earnings (a)	1,575.50	1.1
	Full-time adult average weekly total earnings	1,597.80	1.3
	All employees average weekly total earnings	1,069.10	-1.3
Persons	Full-time adult average weekly ordinary time earnings (a)	1,737.10	1.4
	Full-time adult average weekly total earnings	1,798.00	1.6
	All employees average weekly total earnings (a)	1,305.80	0.1

(a) This component is not seasonally adjusted.

Average weekly earnings, original

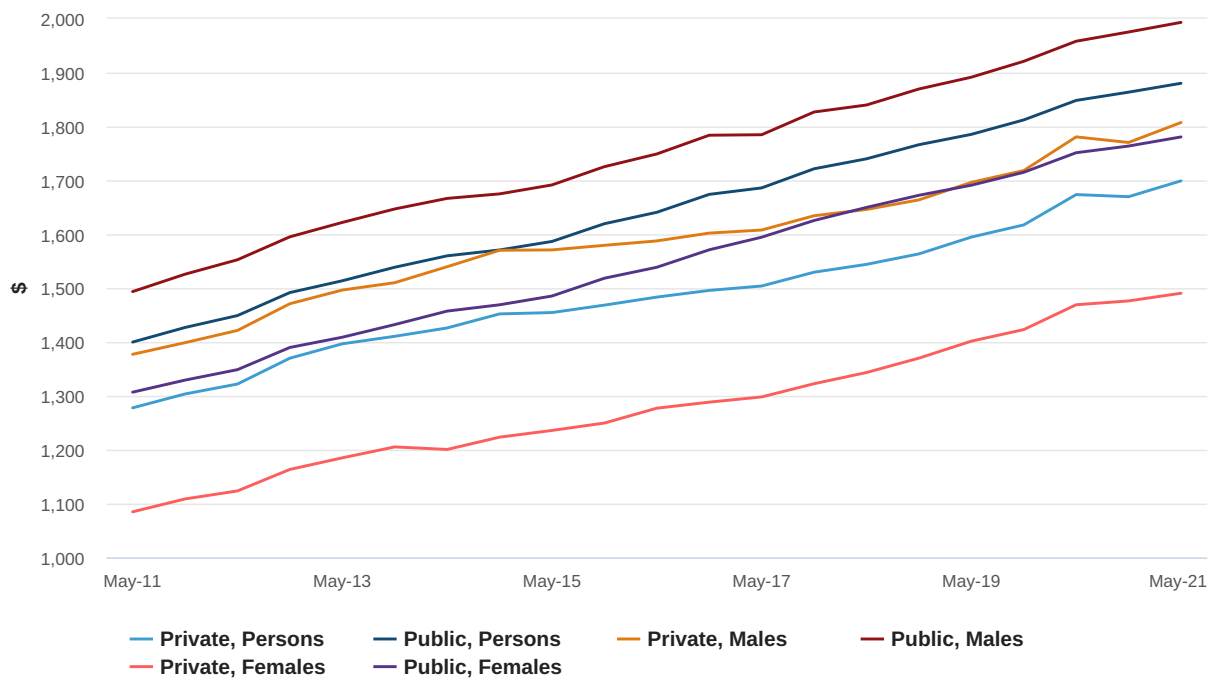
		May 2021	May 2020 to May 2021
		\$	% change
Males	Full-time adult average weekly ordinary time earnings	1,837.00	1.4
	Full-time adult average weekly total earnings	1,919.50	1.6
	All employees average weekly total earnings	1,555.30	1.1
Females	Full-time adult average weekly ordinary time earnings	1,575.50	1.1
	Full-time adult average weekly total earnings	1,598.60	1.4
	All employees average weekly total earnings	1,068.90	-1.3
Persons	Full-time adult average weekly ordinary time earnings	1,737.10	1.4
	Full-time adult average weekly total earnings	1,797.00	1.6
	All employees average weekly total earnings	1,305.80	0.1

Private and public sector

Average weekly earnings, by sector, original

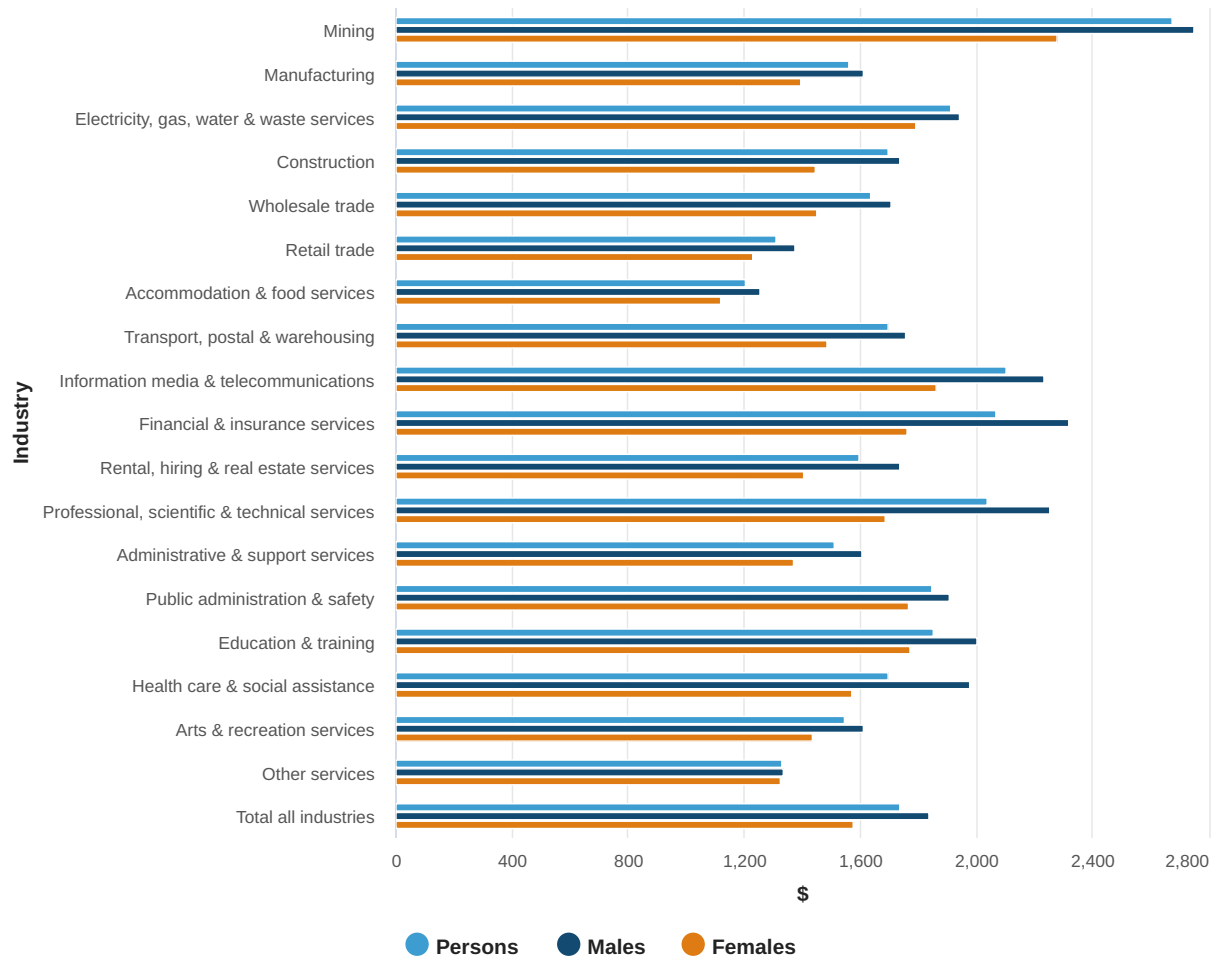
		May 2021	May 2020 to May 2021
		\$	% change
Australia	Full-time adult average weekly ordinary time earnings	1,737.10	1.4
	Full-time adult average weekly total earnings	1,797.00	1.6
	All employees average weekly total earnings	1,305.80	0.1
Private Sector	Full-time adult average weekly ordinary time earnings	1,699.10	1.5
	Full-time adult average weekly total earnings	1,758.30	1.6
	All employees average weekly total earnings	1,242.40	-0.1
Public Sector	Full-time adult average weekly ordinary time earnings	1,880.20	1.7
	Full-time adult average weekly total earnings	1,942.30	2.4
	All employees average weekly total earnings	1,591.00	2.3

Average weekly ordinary time earnings, full time adults by sector, original



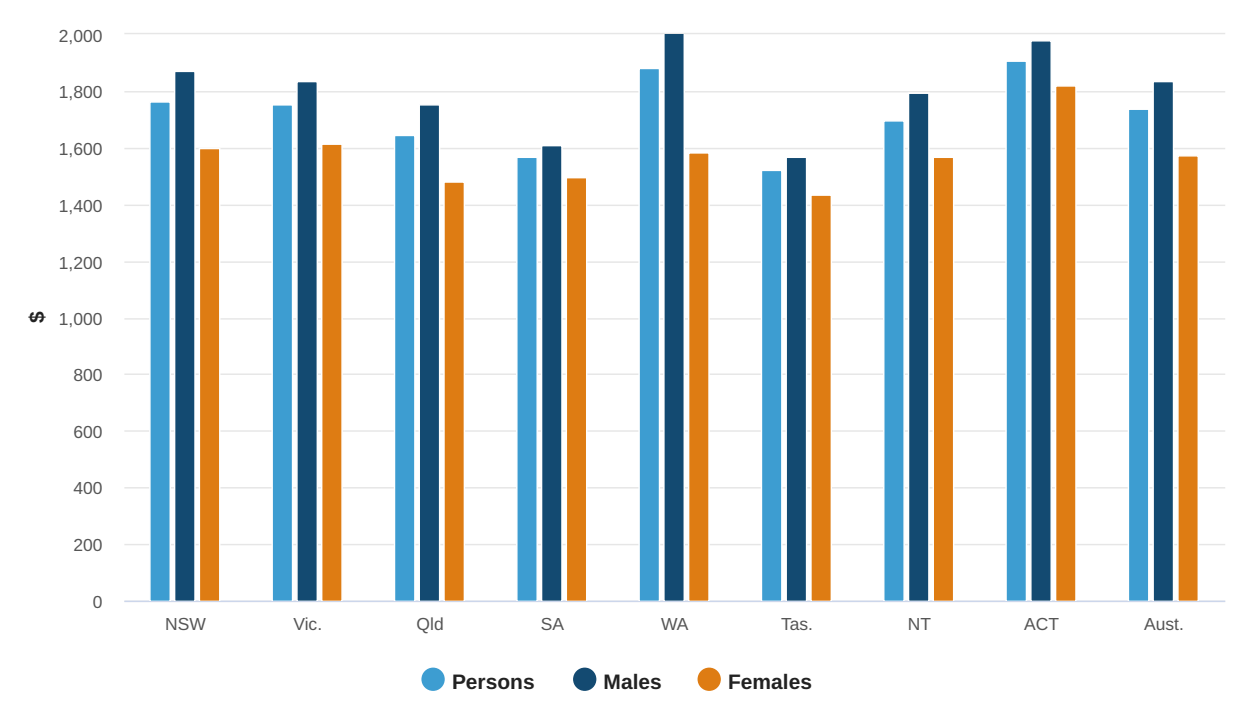
Industry

Average weekly ordinary time earnings, full time adults by industry, original



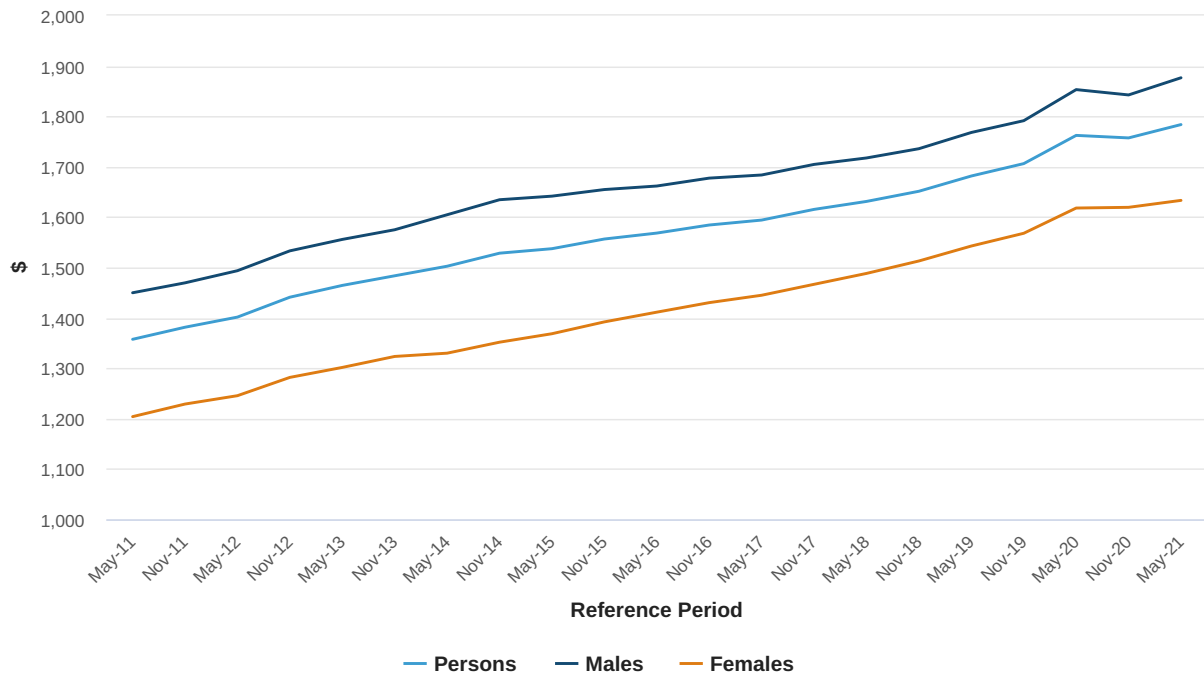
State and territory

Average weekly ordinary time earnings, full time adults by state, original



Cash earnings (includes salary sacrifice)

Average weekly ordinary time cash earnings, full time adults, original



Data downloads

Note

The trend estimates have been suspended from May 2020 for all Average Weekly Earnings series due to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the labour market.

Australia

Table 2. Average weekly earnings, Australia (dollars) - seasonally adjusted

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[62 KB]

Table 3. Average weekly earnings, Australia (dollars) - original

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[73.5 KB]

Sector

Table 5. Average weekly earnings, private sector - Australia (dollars) - seasonally adjusted

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Table 6. Average weekly earnings, private sector - Australia (dollars) - original

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Table 8. Average weekly earnings, public sector - Australia (dollars) - seasonally adjusted

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Table 9. Average weekly earnings, public sector - Australia (dollars) - original

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[74 KB]

Industry

Table 10a. Average weekly earnings, industry, Australia (dollars) - original - males, full time adult ordinary time earnings

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[94 KB]

Table 10b. Average weekly earnings, industry, Australia (dollars) - original - males, full time adult total earnings

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[94 KB]

Table 10c. Average weekly earnings, industry, Australia (dollars) - original - males, total earnings

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[94 KB]

Table 10d. Average weekly earnings, industry, Australia (dollars) - original - females, full time adult ordinary time earnings

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Table 10e. Average weekly earnings, industry, Australia (dollars) - original - females, full time adult total earnings

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[94 KB]

Table 10f. Average weekly earnings, industry, Australia (dollars) - original - females, total earnings

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[94.5 KB]

Table 10g. Average weekly earnings, industry, Australia (dollars) - original - persons, full time adult ordinary time earnings

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Table 10h. Average weekly earnings, industry, Australia (dollars) - original - persons, full time adult total earnings

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[94 KB]

Table 10i. Average weekly earnings, industry, Australia (dollars) - original - persons, total earnings

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[94 KB]

State and territory

Table 12a. Average weekly earnings, New South Wales (dollars) - seasonally adjusted

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[62 KB]

Table 12b. Average weekly earnings, Victoria (dollars) - seasonally adjusted

[↓ Download XLS](#)

[62 KB]

Table 12c. Average weekly earnings, Queensland (dollars) - seasonally adjusted

[↓ Download XLS](#)

[62 KB]

Table 12d. Average weekly earnings, South Australia (dollars) - seasonally adjusted

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[62 KB]

Table 12e. Average weekly earnings, Western Australia (dollars) - seasonally adjusted

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[62 KB]

Table 12f. Average weekly earnings, Tasmania (dollars) - seasonally adjusted

[!\[\]\(125d701e9425b54c764340b5671b38cd_img.jpg\) **Download XLS**](#)
[\[62.5 KB\]](#)

Table 12g. Average weekly earnings, Northern Territory (dollars) - seasonally adjusted

[!\[\]\(2bdfe261b986065ee0ac76460d6528c9_img.jpg\) **Download XLS**](#)
[\[62 KB\]](#)

Table 12h. Average weekly earnings, Australian Capital Territory (dollars) - seasonally adjusted

[!\[\]\(e78f798d4ea5c530c9db49e7d26e6b95_img.jpg\) **Download XLS**](#)
[\[62 KB\]](#)

Table 13a. Average weekly earnings, New South Wales (dollars) - original

[!\[\]\(c694a3ff3b077d76910920a6a1593ab4_img.jpg\) **Download XLS**](#)
[\[74 KB\]](#)

Table 13b. Average weekly earnings, Victoria (dollars) - original

[!\[\]\(05be7c7a8995decd503647c99211f7c2_img.jpg\) **Download XLS**](#)
[\[74 KB\]](#)

Table 13c. Average weekly earnings, Queensland (dollars) - original

[!\[\]\(dd161862f9164df98f62b726e9846241_img.jpg\) **Download XLS**](#)
[\[73.5 KB\]](#)

Table 13d. Average weekly earnings, South Australia (dollars) - original

[!\[\]\(fe3aebe81acea8d45108cd2768939da7_img.jpg\) **Download XLS**](#)
[\[74 KB\]](#)

Table 13e. Average weekly earnings, Western Australia (dollars) - original

[!\[\]\(a8f9309f944226d1420f5fed22e2b6e6_img.jpg\) **Download XLS**](#)
[\[74 KB\]](#)

Table 13f. Average weekly earnings, Tasmania (dollars) - original

[!\[\]\(899d8b7697d64725bf017d3296cfcf1b_img.jpg\) **Download XLS**](#)
[\[73.5 KB\]](#)

Table 13g. Average weekly earnings, Northern Territory (dollars) - original

[!\[\]\(cbd8541a32dfc32f356f5c6c994b0a21_img.jpg\) **Download XLS**](#)
[\[73.5 KB\]](#)

Table 13h. Average weekly earnings, Australian Capital Territory (dollars) - original

[!\[\]\(40770d9ed6ed4f1222ebf89a1396e8b2_img.jpg\) **Download XLS**](#)
[\[74 KB\]](#)

State by sector

Table 14a. Average weekly earnings, private and public sectors, New South Wales (dollars) - original - persons

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[68.5 KB]

Table 14b. Average weekly earnings, private and public sectors, Victoria (dollars) - original - persons

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[68.5 KB]

Table 14c. Average weekly earnings, private and public sectors, Queensland (dollars) - original - persons

[↓ Download XLS](#)

[68.5 KB]

Table 14d. Average weekly earnings, private and public sectors, South Australia (dollars) - original - persons

[↓ Download XLS](#)

[68.5 KB]

Table 14e. Average weekly earnings, private and public sectors, Western Australia (dollars) - original - persons

[↓ Download XLS](#)

[68.5 KB]

Table 14f. Average weekly earnings, private and public sectors, Tasmania (dollars) - original - persons

[↓ Download XLS](#)

[68.5 KB]

Table 14g. Average weekly earnings, private and public sectors, Northern Territory (dollars) - original - persons

[↓ Download XLS](#)

[68.5 KB]

Table 14h. Average weekly earnings, private and public sectors, Australian Capital Territory (dollars) - original - persons

[↓ Download XLS](#)

[69 KB]

Cash earnings (includes salary sacrifice)

Table 15: Average weekly cash earnings, Australia by sector (dollars) - original

[↓ Download XLS](#)

[255 KB]

Table 16: Average weekly cash earnings, state by sector (dollars) - original

[↓ Download XLS](#)

[4 MB]

Table 17: Average weekly cash earnings, industry, Australia (dollars) - original

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[3.01 MB]

All May 2021 spreadsheets

Time series spreadsheets

[↓ Download ZIP](#)

[3.14 MB]

Seasonality

Some of the seasonally adjusted series above do not display seasonality, so they are not seasonally adjusted.

In these cases the seasonally adjusted figure will be the same as the original series.

The file below lists the treatment of each of these series.

Seasonality guide

[↓ Download XLSX](#)

[40.46 KB]

Article archive

[Spotlight - increases in average weekly earnings - compositional changes during the COVID-19 period \(/statistics/labour/earnings-and-work-hours/average-weekly-earnings-australia/may-2020#spotlight-increases-in-average-weekly-earnings-compositional-changes-during-the-covid-19-period\)](#)

[Spotlight - comparing average weekly earnings with other measures of earnings \(/statistics/labour/earnings-and-work-hours/average-weekly-earnings-australia/may-2020#spotlight-comparing-average-weekly-earnings-with-other-measures-of-earnings\)](#)

[Spotlight - average weekly earnings survey methods during COVID-19 \(/statistics/labour/earnings-and-work-hours/average-weekly-earnings-australia/may-2020#spotlight-average-weekly-earnings-survey-methods-during-covid-19\)](#)

Previous catalogue number

This release previously used catalogue number 6302.0.

Methodology

[Average Weekly Earnings, Australia methodology, May 2021](#)